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*The Society having appointed a Committee to collect information respecting the past and present state of this country, the Committee during the last year addressed the following letter to such persons as were likely, in their opinion to advance the object of the Society.*

## [ C I R C U L A R . ]

PHILOSOPHICAL HALL, PHILADELPHIA.

SIR,

THE American Philosophical Society have always considered the antiquity, changes, and present state of their own country as primary objects of their research; and with a view to facilitate such discoveries, a permanent committee has been established, among whose duties the following have been recommended as requiring particular attention.

1. To procure one or more entire skeletons of the Mammoth, so called, and of such other unknown animals as either have been, or hereafter may be discovered in America.

2. To obtain accurate plans, drawings and descriptions of whatever is interesting, (where the originals cannot be had) and especially of ancient Fortifications, Tumuli, and other Indian works of art: ascertaining the materials composing them, their contents, the purposes for which they were probably designed, &c.

3. To invite researches into the Natural History of the Earth, the changes it has undergone as to Mountains, Lakes, Rivers, Prairies, &c.

4. To

4. To inquire into the Customs, Manners, Languages and Character of the Indian nations, ancient and modern, and their migrations.

The importance of these objects will be acknowledged by every Lover of Science, and, we trust, sufficiently apologize for thus troubling you: for without the aid of gentlemen who have taste and opportunity for such researches, our means would be very confined. We therefore solicit your communications, now or in future, on these subjects; which will be at all times thankfully received, and duly noticed in the publications of the Society.

As to the first object, the committee suggest to Gentlemen who may be in the way of inquiries of that kind, that the Great Bone Lick on the Ohio, and other places where there may be mineral salt, are the most eligible spots for the purpose; because animals are known to resort to such places.

With respect to the second head, the committee are desirous that cuts in various directions may be made into many of the Tumuli, to ascertain their contents; while the diameter of the largest tree growing thereon, the number of its annulars and the species of the tree, may tend to give some idea of their antiquity. If the works should be found to be of Masonry; the length, breadth, and height of the walls ought to be carefully measured, the form and nature of the stones described, and specimens of both the cement and stones sent to the committee.

The best methods of obtaining information on the other subjects will naturally suggest themselves to you; and we rely on a disposition favourable to our wishes.

The

The Committee consist of the following Gentlemen, viz.

THOMAS JEFFERSON, President of the American  
Philosophical Society, at Monticello in Virginia.

JAMES WILKINSON, Commander of the Army at  
Head Quarters.

GEORGE TURNER, of the Western Territory, near  
Cincinnati.

Dr. CASPAR WISTAR, Vice President	} in Philada.
of the A. P. S.	
Dr. ADAM SEYBERT, Secretary of do.	
C. W. PEALE, and	
JON. WILLIAMS.	

Your communications may be addressed to any one of the Committee, but the articles you may think proper to furnish should be sent to this place.

In behalf of the Committee,

I am respectfully,

Sir, your obedient servant,

\_\_\_\_\_ Chairman.

To \_\_\_\_\_